

CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for managing printers in a network environment, comprising:

defining all groups that a new user belongs to, as well as a user name, client name, and station name when said new user logs onto a client station in the network;

automatically executing a printer management software program each time that a user logs onto said network;

said printer management software program querying a printer database to establish all printers that the designated groups, user, client and station have been assigned; and

said printer management software program executing a configuration routine for each assigned printer identified in said query step, said routine comprising the following substeps;

checking whether a printer driver is installed for each assigned ~~authorized~~ printer and, if not, installing the printer driver,;

automatically configuring each assigned printer identified in said querying ~~surveying~~ step,

whereby said ~~recursive~~ configuration routine is executed for each assigned printer identified in said querying ~~surveying~~ step until all such assigned printers are fully configured.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method for managing printers in a network environment according to claim 1, wherein said step of executing a configuration routine for each assigned printer identified in said query step further comprises executing a routine to configure local printers

connected to the user's computer, whereby all required driver software is automatically installed and the permissions of the local printer are set so that only authorized users can access the local printer.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method for managing printers in a network environment according to claim 2, wherein said step of executing a configuration routine for each assigned printer identified in said query step further comprises executing a routine to configure network printers connected to the user's network, whereby all required driver software is automatically installed and the permissions of the network printers are set so that only authorized users can access the network printers.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The method for managing printers in a network environment according to claim 1, wherein said step of executing a configuration routine for each assigned printer identified in said query step further comprises automatically setting a default printer for the user.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method for managing printers in a network environment according to claim 1, further comprising a step of cleaning up all created printers and printer connections when a user logs off, thereby preventing accumulation of unwanted and unneeded printers and printer connections.